776 hence on Mousso Koroni. The ritual cultivation of millet, a noble
241 activity to which every aristocratic Bambara must dedicate himself,
783 is an institution which Faro taught in his time and constitutes a purification and a reordering of the soil (1).

1. Dugukolo be be dyuruma, "the whole earth is impure." But as only virgin soil is considered impure, it is also said: dyurumu be be dugukolo ka forow sani nyala do, "the whole earth is impure except for the cultivated fields." The word dugukolo (literally, bone of the earth) designates both the earth as a whole and the earth as matter. The same notions concerning the impurity of the earth hold for the Dogon. See M. Griaule, Dieu d'eau, p. 94.

[171]

Faro

Faro's Shapes

776 Faro was a "voice" before he materialized into a body. In his role as master of the word and reorganizer of the universe, he is represented by a spiral, munu, in which he occupies the point of origin at all times. The spiral is situated in the center of the cardinal points (2). Its vibratory unrolling represents "the displacement of

2. This "central point," which is also the firmament, is described by the Bambara as sa tyema kolo, literally, the bone of the middle of the sky.

Faro for the realization of all things in the universe."

776 This image is materialized in a basketry headdress, yugu, with a
292 spiral of eight turns. The straw sprigs that form the spokes supporting the spiral symbolize the vibration; the intervals, yugunye or eye of the yugu, which separate them are rays of light, the spiral representing

776 292 the daily movement of the sun "which unfolds until evening." The regularity of the rays symbolizes order and the classification of beings and things by Faro. The /41/ ends of the straw sprigs forming the spiral must remain free: they represent the infinite extension of Faro's realm and power. The hat is also a mask "which hides Faro's invisible face and through which he watches over the world" (1).

1. Today, a basket of considerably higher dimensions is made and used by women (See pl. I, b).

[613] The headgear yugu was formerly reserved for the king, who wore it under a turban. Certain deserving old men were also permitted to keep it. The rituals of making and wearing this headdress attest to the importance attributed to it. In particular, when an old man was [695] suspected of having committed a serious offense, his hat was pierced with four holes representing the four cardinal points. He was then made to wear it, thus submitting him to Faro's judgment; if found guilty, he died.

776 As the spirit of the waters, Faro is supposed to belong to the white race and his body to be half albino flesh and half copper (pl. I, c).

776 A myth relates how his physical being was formed.

773 When Faro caused the streaming waters to descend on earth, he manifested himself for a long time only by his voice. He had no body, and since he needed appropriate matter to achieve one, he bided his time in the waters of the sea.

The winged spirit Téliko, who had the body of an albino, wished one day, in his arrogance and jealousy, to cross the world in order to know it and to dominate it. Faro, warned by the dogfish, decided to seize his enemy's body to complete his own. The albino, who always flew, fed on his own substance. He chewed his own flesh and his bones were soon bare; the marrow came out of them. It turned into red copper which fell into the sea and nourished Faro.

While Téliko descended to the water level, the dogfish that was watching him sang in order to attract him. The albino, aware of the danger, climbed back to the highest heaven, attempting to continue his flight and to reach the ends of the world. But he quickly lost strength and after his dya had fallen into the waters, his body was

794 292 The costume worn by the dancer is held up by a sort of carcass (bry) made of ngolobe (1) wood used because of its flexibility, and is

1. Combretum micranthum.

enveloped with a light blanket for protection. Inside the bry are suspended various flutes (komo fle) which are blackened by the blood of sacrifices offered to "improve their sound" and which will be used in the course of the ceremonies. Along with these flutes is a little bag filled with spare spider webs. Any individual who goes under the [834] bry to dance must abstain from sexual relations for a specified period of time prior to the ceremony.

The costume (nya) which covers the carcass is made with the clothing of individuals killed by the Komo (2). Contrary to the bry, which

2. When a guilty member or a non-initiate is "killed" by the Komo, his clothing is offered to it.

has no active role but serves only to isolate the dancer inside the mask, the religious role of the costume is very important. It represents the "body and the valor of the ancestors." It is not the object of blood sacrifices, but is covered by a powder made of the bones of individuals killed by the Komo to which has been added kola nut juice. The 794 cloth is dyed with black earth taken from the river bank in exchange 292 for a small offering of copper, gold, or cereals. Drawings called 532 komo mani (literally, little people of the Komo) are made on the cloth to represent Faro on the one hand, recognizable by his long black hair, and on the other the eight ancestors who received the word. All the first agricultural implements of the Bambara are drawn with red ochre. The feathers of black, white, and red egrets are then sewn on the nya to hide /151/ the black earth, which is the spirit's abode. Two days before everything is taken out, these feathers are the object of offerings of kola nut juice, millet mash, and the blood of fowls.

794 292 784 The costume, like the head of the mask, must be seen neither by women nor by noninitiates. "Its color would change and it would become dull, making a purification necessary."

794 532 The body of the mask has two arms into which the dancer introduces his own. The arms terminate in a hook, koli (3), which is

304 561 The date of the circumcision alone makes a coherent whole of a heterogeneous group—an age grade within /181/ which all the members owe each other friendship, confidence, and help in all phases of social and private life.

304 292 Once the operation has been decided upon, the relatives proceed

531

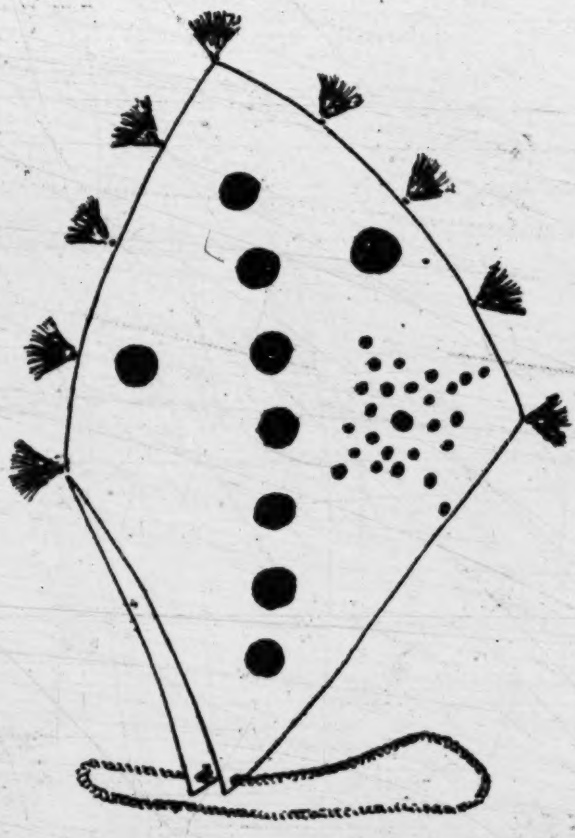

Fig. 14 — Cap of the circumcised Bambara. The nine black spots represent the child, his dya, and the cardinal points. The design at the right represents the sumangolo, or the coming of the twelve waters of the future. (See Fig. 3)

first to make the cap worn during the seclusion. The white cloth is presented to the Niger by a uterine brother who addresses a prayer to Faro requesting permission to draw with black earth the designs that will cover it. They will protect the child who is in a state of impurity

304 throughout the seclusion, the cap itself guaranteeing protection of his
292 head against the rays of fire from the fifth sky, koblenkaba (see Fig. 14).

304 Seven large black dots, vertically disposed, represent the child, 3,
292 and his dya, 4, as well as the man, 3, which he will later become, and
531 his future wife, 4. They also insure his protection from east to west. The two other dots insure it from north to south. The cross of small dots recalls the sumangolos, the "realization of the world" (1) and the

1. See p. 56, Fig. 4.

purification obtained after the operation and the loss of the wanzo. Eight tassels (Faro's number) are placed on the cap, whose fringes were spun by a grandmother and are sewn on to "attract the forces of space." A ninth at the top is blackened with the spirit's earth. With his head thus covered, the circumcised boy is placed in the protective and purifying light of Faro. To operate upon a child without putting the cap on him would in fact amount to "bowing down before the acts of Mousso Koroni."

304 On his part, the blacksmith-circumciser makes preparations for the
326 operation, the essential instrument of which is a knife called boloko
413 kumba moru (literally, knife head, mother of the circumcision). He himself has forged it and carries it in a small leather sheath hung from his hip (see Fig. 15) (2).

[582] 2. The endogamy among blacksmiths is attributed to their role in circumcision and to the fact that their tools, especially this knife, are impregnated with the wanzo of the adolescents.

The handle is slipped into a sort of iron sheath closed at one extremity called kurukun (literally, ball head) and open at the other called sukala (literally, sorcerer's handle). It is forged from one piece with the blade dyomuru fala (literally, orphan of the knife) and called "without pity" in archaic language.

The knife and its handle on the one hand, together with the metal sheath on the other, symbolize the person of the circumcised boy and the foreskin which is to be removed.

304 recovers part of his tere. The organ is then held up by means of a
326 small apparatus, mine naw, made of a millet stem split in two in the shape of a fork.

"Circumcision is a sacrifice" (1). It is only valid if blood has run,

1. Bolokoli ye saraka ye.

and any patient who has not wet the ground with his blood is wounded on the thigh by the circumciser. The same is true for a child born
[732 without a foreskin. This detail must, moreover, be kept secret by
582] the members of his age grade, since the revelation of a malformation might prevent the individual concerned from contracting a marriage (2).

2. A woman might believe that these malformations are the sign that the man who was operated upon has not lost his wanzo, a fact which would be a definite obstacle to marriage.

/186/ When all is finished, the operator, holding the foreskins in his hand, says these words before burying them:

"We have transferred the wanzo of the circumcised child, may the tere be well" (3).

3. Ãn ye dẽ bolokole wanzo fili la, tere ka ñe.

304 After this, the circumcised boys have their caps put first on their
292 napes and foreheads representing the east-west direction, and then on
561 the sides of their heads representing the north-south direction. All their strength resides from then on in the headpiece which they will wear night and day, without removing it, during the entire period of seclusion.

304 The approach to the site of the operation is formally forbidden to
184 women and uncircumcised males. The one who might go there out of
561 curiosity "would contract the wanzo" (wanzo ba nofe, "the wanzo follows him"). Any uncircumcised boy who might break this law would have to take the consequences at the time of his own operation

304 During the seclusion, they wear about their head a piece of white
[292 cloth, Faro's color, which has the same function as the cap of the
534] circumcised boy. They shake a gourd bolokode barani, filled with eight grains or small pebbles, whose sound keeps passers-by away. The leaps, which they perform over the fire made of clothes, gourds, and refuse that have been ignited, end the seclusion and rid them of their wanzo, which goes to settle in the altars of the ndomo.

It is said of a young girl who was well excised that she is well behaved and carries herself with dignity. On the contrary, it is said of a girl of light morals "that her hands were not washed clean" (1).

1. A bolo ma ko ka dye ya.

which means that she was improperly excised.

Funerals

761 The effect of death is to dissociate the elements composing the
764 person. The body becomes a corpse (su) from which the /189/ ni and
775 the dya escape to follow their particular destinies, while the tere is transformed into nyama, an active and dangerous force which wanders about the deceased. The funeral rites aim first to channel the deceased's spiritual elements which must be conserved in the interest of the deceased as well as that of the community. Moreover, through the care given to the body and to these elements, the memory of the dead person is piously kept up. The notion of a final resurrection, promised to all who have lived, inspires these preparations. The bones of the deceased, which are like the exuvia of his physical body, its solid and durable framework, join the exuvia of his soul which is kept in the altars of the Komo. Thus, at the end of time, the dead man "will rise and, to everyone's joy, join his family."

764 The funeral rites, which the Bambara have always celebrated, have evolved along with their beliefs. At the time when the cult of the balanza was flourishing, the dead bodies were hung from trees until they rotted, their bones picked up and kept by their descendants.
[532] The ancestors of the Gwonna then carved pieces of sunzun wood called mani (literally, little person) in the image of the dead. The length of the wood was proportionate to the length of the body; the head, arms, legs, and genitals were carefully reproduced. The mani

765 twice a day, morning and evening, they go in procession, their [514] heads covered with caps made of white cloth. They spend the nights together, in a single hut if possible.

The wives of the deceased go out only when it is absolutely necessary during the first moon after the death; they [292] are dressed in white and wear a kind of white hood on their heads and sandals made of goatskin on their feet. At the end of the moon, at night and separately, they go to a sort of purification rite [783] that takes place at the crossroads outside the village.

Up to the fortieth day there is a very gradual return to ordinary life. Then, and only then, the successor to the deceased is finally recognized and installed, as is shown in the chronicle of Ségou.

801 In closing, let us note how every ritual sequence rests 805 on periods of time whose real meaning must be sought in magic. The astral religion of the Semites in fact taught that on the third, seventh, and fortieth day after death the moon acts more powerful to destroy the body (1). Apparently some

1. See the meeting of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres of August 9, 1918, paper by Franz Cumont, "La commémoration des morts et l'astrologie [The Commemoration of the Dead and Astrology]," Journal Officiel (1918), p. 7224.

such beliefs must account for the Bambara rites planned precisely according to these numbers. This seems all the more likely since the Sudanese commonly believe that the fortieth day marks the separation of the flesh from the bones of buried corpses.

857 use corporal punishment.

From this early age, therefore, a Bambara is subject to the corporate discipline which will henceforth dominate his whole life, for the same sort of discipline prevails in the adult brotherhoods.

857 The genie-protector is honored by offerings, [237] sacri-
292 fices, and ritual dances. When they perform these dances, the
782 n-Tomo-den' take turns wearing the ceremonial mask and costume. The mask has the form of a human face surmounted by a number of vertical horns (five to eight of these) and decorated with a few cowries. The costume consists of a dloki (a kind of blouse with wide sleeves) and a pair of long trousers, which completely cover the body. If the costume is yellowish-brown (basa) or white (dye), the association is called "n-Tomo-fin' (black n-Tomo)" or "n-Tomo-dye (white n-Tomo)," respectively. Is this costume supposed to represent the adepts' conception of their protector's appearance? No. As in all sects, it is intended to differentiate the officiant from the profane world (1).

536

1. Some of these associations give a kind of public performance from which they derive profit. Notably, they exhibit a kind of puppet called peremperen' (dancers) which members of the n-Tomo manipulate in a more or less comical manner; often one of the puppets represents a man and the other a woman, and their movements abound in the obscenities which are so popular with the onlookers.

831

831 A wooden phallus (or a small board) is commonly used to
857 summon the n-Tomo-den' to meetings. This is tied to the end
534 of a rope and whirled like a sling, producing a noise which the operator can vary and which carries a considerable distance. This apparatus is called n-Tomo-ulu, translated as "dog of the
195 n-Tomo." It should be noted that the words used in the brotherhoods usually have a double meaning, with a special sense under a vulgar form. For instance, the word ulu means both

881 evil genii in order to preserve the "people of the soli" (soli-ma-u)
789 from their bewitchments.

881 The soli. The soli, this make-believe birth, is marked
304 by a bloody operation, circumcision for the boys and excision for the girls. The fact that the ceremony does not get its name from this operation demonstrates that it is merely show; it is merely a rite of separation between the previous state and the new one (3). The operation takes place at dawn.

[71]

3. That is why among other peoples the operation does not exist or represented by a mere slash on the thigh (among the Koniagui).

Boys. The blacksmith who is to circumcise the boys waits outside the village under a tree. Assisted by members [243] of the sects and especially by the Komo-tigi, he performs the operation behind a loincloth hung up as a screen. The boy stands erect, and the blacksmith draws out the prepuce and cuts it off, after having determined approximately the proper place to cut. The patient is expected to show no weakness; on the contrary, he exerts himself to say a few words to show his courage.

As soon as the operation is finished, a gunshot announces the news to the elders crouched about the village fires, and a female griot proclaims it to the bystanders. The Komo-tigi takes a few nyanka leaves, burns them, and goes to place the ashes on the boy's familial kara. The boy runs off to rejoin his companions under the tree especially chosen for this reassembly. All the boys will spend their days there, on the fringe of society with which they are forbidden to mingle. They return to the village only at night, to sleep in a hut reserved for them.

881 A man reputed to know how to care for circumcised
304 boys lives with them, takes care of them, and closely supervises them; this is the sema-tye. Every day abundant food is brought
● 292 to him for his patients. The latter wear a dloki (blouse) and kursi (trousers) made of cotton cloth, blue or yellow-brown (basa) depending on their affiliations (1), and their headgear is usually

1. The basa color is much in demand

881 304 292 among the Bambara, while the Marka use cloth dyed indigo-blue.

a high cap with strings extending from the earlaps. They can only leave the place where they are assembled, even for the needs of nature, under the leadership of the sema-tye and shaking a stick of wood to which are attached bits of broken pottery. This rattle is called n-koso-m-bara.

881 304 They pass the time plaiting mats, gossiping, laughing, and pestering passers-by. On market days they are permitted to block the paths leading to the village and to collect a tithe from the traders.

The officials of the sects often visit them in their retreat.

Girls. The blacksmiths' wives who are to remove part of the clitoris await the girls outside the village under the trees. Some matrons assist them. Each child in turn runs up to the operator and squeezes herself between [244] the legs of the matron who exposes the clitoris. The excised clitoris is laid [789] in a little woven basket and is carefully preserved for making talismans.

The completion of the operation is announced in the same way as for the boys, and the Komo-tigi likewise puts the ashes from nyanka leaves on the familial kara.

The girl then rejoins her companions in the hut reserved for them in each section of the settlement. There they are under the surveillance of an old woman, the sema-moso, who knows how to take care of them and who sees to it that they behave properly. They are very well fed.

881 Wrapped in skirts, they lean on canes of dried millet stalks when they walk and shake a gourd pierced with holes and [514] filled with pebbles. They go out only for the needs of nature and then all in a body. They warn the passers-by by shaking their rattles and singing improvised songs. As they near paths outside the village, they intone a refrain.

Soli da woro (1). The seclusion of the soli-ma ceases

1. Literally, "sixth day of the soli."

794 Some of the clergy use a disguise when officiating in
[292] public; furthermore, the ceremonies are held only at night.
Finally, in the presence of the profane, the initiated
[198] use a special language for everything referring specifically to
the cult. The greatest secret of all is the name of the nyana,
[551] because anyone who knows the name has complete power over
the spirit it designates.

794 From the point of view of the disguised clerical body,
298 this secrecy is virtually impenetrable. A disguised person loses
his human personality and is withdrawn from the natural world.
It is an accepted fact that it is dangerous for those not affiliated
to intercept his glance through the tiny openings in the mask;
undoubtedly his person on that occasion is impregnated with a
fluid whose emanations are fatal to those who, not being
affiliated, are unprotected against them.

Some of these disguises include a headdress or mask
and for the body a kind of costume usually made of long strips
of vegetal material; is this, as has been suggested, simply a
means of dominating the herd of adepts and even more the pro-
fane through the terror such regalia inspires when seen at night
by the flickering light of torches and bonfires? It seems more
probable that one must put this matter on the plane of the
supernatural in order to understand it. Dangerous wild animals
[825 are believed to be incarnations of evil and powerful gods, and
776] an attempt is made to present an outward appearance consistent
with the terror merely seeing them inspires, in order thereby
to acquire the supernatural qualities that characterize them (1).

> 1. There is no doubt that some individ-
> uals, under the influence of the role of
> wild beast that they are portraying, have
> been led to commit actual murders during
> ritual observances. I have often heard
> this asserted in connection with the dyara
> (lion).

794 It should be noted that the costume, gestures, [259]
782 dances, songs, and music of the dye-n-fa and their acolytes

794 over the threshold (2). The ceremonies are announced and
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2. Then the door is called su-bo-da, "exit of the corpse," and the sacrificer is called moso-bolo (literally, "woman's hand").

[534] accompanied by a strident, wild orchestra made up of drums (denu-ba) which are accompanied by iron instruments, called kinge, consisting of pieces of metal that are struck against each other or shaken to obtain sound from the rings attached to them. The "cry" of the Komo, which the wara-da shouts through his horn, is accompanied by a kind of reed pipe played by his companions.

[782] There is nothing unusual about the offerings, sacrifices, or communion. The blood of the victim is used to wash the boli and the priests, as will be described for the Nama.

Processions held at night are always very effective, and they strike terror into the hearts of not only the uninitiated but also the initiated themselves. This long cortege, lighted by the torchbearers who shout and dash about like madmen while the wara-da gives the "cry" of the Komo, makes a very strong impression on everyone who sees or hears it (3). [273]

3. Elsewhere, the Komo meets in the daytime, and in the old days, notably in Bobo country, it was very popular (cf. Binger, Du Niger au golfe de Guinée [From the Niger to the Gulf of Guinea], Vol. 1, p. 379, and Monteil, De Saint-Louis à Tripoli par le Tchad [From Saint-Louis to Tripoli via Chad], p. 89). We have already seen that all the officiants in the brotherhood are called dou, "the hidden people," because of the disguises they affect. "The dou are persons ludicrously disguised, wearing clothing on which are sewed bits of da-fou (native

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hemp), palm fibers, and leaves. On their heads they wear a cap or calotte, also made of hemp and surmounted by a yellowish-red wooden crest or a bird's beak, also of wood. There are two holes in the calotte for the eyes. These dou are given free dlo by the populace which makes up their cortege. They wander about the village and fields day and night..." (Binger).

794
[796] There is never any cult service or ceremony on Monday or Thursday.

The clergy serves as an administrative council for the property of the Komo-ya (brotherhood of the Komo) in accordance with the general principles already noted. The Komo-tigi of Tiguini, we have been told, is especially famous for respecting the principles which give the treasury of the brotherhood an exclusively fraternal character.

The Komo-ya are mutually independent, and all have experienced the kind of deviations which give rise to political action. The Komo has played a preponderant role in the affairs of the clan of Ségou, as is evident from the chronicle.

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539 Young men are taken into the brotherhood during the harvest festivals. They appear before the circle of initiates, while those present sing:

Da woro-na nana,
Bolo-ko deu da woro-na,
Toro man na ko la-nyini.
Sira bo nin' ye, ko dugu le den';
Sira bo nin' ye ko dugu le sira.

Translation: "The sixth day has come, the sixth day of the newborn (1), and there has been no accident. Let us show the

1. That is, those who have just been born to a new status through the soli or bolo-ko.

794 of Kore-dyuga-tigi and has the same meaning.

[301] most part strangely accoutered dancers, each of whom dresses as his fancy dictates. As ornaments, the Kor'dyuga wear strings of beautiful red beans, which are inedible, called n-go ble. These beans are about the size of a large dragée and throughout the western Sudan are used as protection against evil spirits.

[292] These dancers have a leader, the Koro-duga-tigi or Kor'dyuga-tigi, who is further distinguished by a kind of cloak made entirely of bits of reed stalks. On his head he wears a conical hat made of the same reeds, and in his hand he carries a long wand from which hang birds' skulls, packets of sorghum straw, gourd stems, etc. In addition to the dancers, the clergy is accompanied by

[785] flagellants (bisa-tyi-la), torchbearers (ta-tugu-la-n-tigi), and people who lash themselves with bundles of thorns (the ngoni-sa-ma-u).

[534] Of course, the Kore has its orchestra, which includes drums (denu-ba), a kind of castanet (kinge), and gourds filled with seeds or pebbles (nkude) and pierced with holes.

794 The cult has the usual ceremonies, with the two great festivals at the times of planting and harvesting. On these oc-
796 casions the Kore-tigi officiates, as the nyana-n-son-na-ba does with respect to nyana dugu-da-siri. He makes the offerings, performs the sacrifices, and sets forth the requests at the foot of the sacred tree, after having thanked the god-protector. The kara and the Kore-kongolo are sprinkled with the blood of the victims; thus, the manes and the nyana of the boli are honored simultaneously.

[764] There is always a meeting of the brotherhood when a Kore-de dies. There are offerings, sacrifices, and communion with all the offerings, which require one or more days of orgies to be consumed, depending on the importance of the deceased, because elders in [282] important posts like that of nyana-n-son-na-ba, etc., are particularly honored at their death.

Young men are admitted only once every seven years, and it is at this time that the ceremonies are most elaborate.

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Plate 4

Fig. 7. Penperenni, small dancers in costume.

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Fig. 8. N'Tomo mask decorated with cowries.

[End Plate 4]

534 787 asks: modè (grandson) for unimportant subjects, hunting, voyages; fadè (son of the father) for individual life, physical and moral; fa (father) for the future, destiny, the public life of a man, his authority, his rule; fakoroke (father's older brother) for the plantings, the rains, for fortune; fa dogone (father's younger brother) for germination of the cereals; ba (mother) for everything concerning the women; [107] faso (father's house) for everything concerning the familial abode or the absent.

534 The principal efficacy of the harp is in bringing order, by the rhythms and sounds emanating from it, to all that is troubled in the march of events.

The harp presides at sacrifices, at cathartic or medical rites, at purifications, at apotropaic rites, at solitary meditations. Its high notes are celestial and symbolic of completeness; the low notes connote terrestrial things and incompleteness. Its playing commands arrivals and departures, proliferations and diminutions, calls to order; its presence at the edge of a pool, where it had been silently placed, is assurance of appeasement.

The harpist, before beginning his service, puts his mouth to [788] the orifice in the frame and murmurs to the master of the Word: "Now it is your turn, organize the world." (1)

1. Passim, Griaule, "Symbole des arts africains" [Symbol of the African Arts].

533 534 Music, dance, and song are intimately linked in the religious movement. Thus it is that a djo of the Samaké (Bougouni circle) is composed entirely of musicians who form an orchestra in which the whole scale is represented by eight different principal instruments, which are types of a multitude of others. There is one n'ganian-ba, an instrument made by hollowing out a trough in a tree trunk, which gives a very deep sound when rubbed; it is the bass which gives the cadence. Two to three tioro give a sharper sound; four to six tioun, a still sharper sound, and there are as many as ten fere, the instrument with the sharpest sound. Finally, a host of N'ganian dyeli begin the 533 292 music as the griot quiets the crowd at the start. All these instruments have the form of a pirogue. In addition, the orchestra includes two singers and two dancers. Everyone wears masks, bonnets with crests

533 of black, red, and yellow fibers, clothes of plaited fibers, and the
292 musicians wear a cuirass made of fana seeds (a sort of bean). The bass player wears a band in the back which reaches to his heels and describes a circle when the musician whirls in going from north to south and from east to west to give the cadence. The other musicians form a circle which the dancers and singers do not enter. Another djo is the So, where the musicians and the singers wear masks of wooden horses, except for two clowns who represent the masculine element in the midst of the crowd of young girls. Lastly, the third djo is the djõ buru (buru, "trumpet"). This is the djo of the slaves; they play the ivory horn and are clothed like the N'ganian, but the bass player represents a cow, and the others are the heifers who respond to the cadence indicated to them by their mother.

E. Literature

538 Bambara literature, entirely oral, is extremely rich. It is the monopoly of the griot who from their earliest days learn the stories, the proverbs, the mottoes associated with each [108] family. They recite very long and very numerous epic songs concerning each great family, accompanying themselves on the harp. Certain parts are recited, others are sung in chorus by the griot and his wife. These stories are at the same time historical narratives of heroes' exploits and the mythical history of a demiurge symbolized by the hero. An infinitely small part of these epic songs has been collected. Some Bambara proverbs and stories have been collected by Moussa Traoré in particular.

545 It is interesting to mention another literary production, one
744 in which the creative inspiration of the artist plays a greater part:
522 these are the narratives of the members of the Kworé brotherhood. The Kworéduga are clowns, or rather commedia dell'arte players. One is a Kworéduga by hereditary transmission or by natural bent. During his initiation in the bush, where he submits to ritual harsh treatment, the initiate learns never to lose his temper, no matter what the circumstances. He is taught a comic language, witty sayings. He is trained to observe men's character closely and to recite stanzas and couplets giving his observations.

852 After this special sacrifice come the individual sacrifices, and
796 the very young boys who are henceforth to belong to the n'tomo
782 prostrate themselves before the fetish tree and take an oath to reveal nothing to the uninitiated, and especially not to little girls. This oath is not at all trivial: "If you talk, if you reveal your oath, " says the leader showing each one some black powder, "you will die." And they all reply without trembling: "May I die!"

852 When the rite of admission is over, each initiate plucks his hen
796 and draws it, and while the victims simmer over the fire in an earthen conari, the youngsters beat drums and abandon themselves to the dance, and so into a frenzy which continues under the eye of the fetish, in the shade of its preferred tree until the time of the feast. Each child in turn dances the dance of the fetish, which consists of leaps and capers and a graceful twirling of a flexible switch. To dance he dons
[292] the white or yellow blouse of the fetish (n'tomo ka dloki, "the blouse of the n'tomo"), which is white (dje) or black, yellow (fign, as I said in the preceding chapter) /sic/ /111/, and takes the horned mask, the n'tomo kongolo ("head of the n'tomo") by means of which he externalizes in a concrete form his concept of the genie.

Victims abound, and the feast is plentiful. There is enough for everybody, and there is not one on that day who does not lick his fingers and say with a smile: "Ne ne fara de! (1) How full I am!"

1. Né, "me, " "I"; fara, "am full"; dé, "surely."

The little boys' families contribute much, for Bambara mothers and little sisters have good hearts. Thanks to them, every initiate can offer from 10 to 20 liters of dégé, the same amount of d'lo; and his gourd of to (gruel) holds enough to tire six to eight big eaters. In addition to the dessert, which is kola nut, each boy receives a new garment for himself and a light bogo and sometimes a tafé (2) for

2. Tafé, rectangular piece of cloth which the women wear around their hips.

[291]

4: Henry--126 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8

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1. Drums over a meter long and peculiar to the koré.

2. A kind of triangle which is hung on the thumb of the left hand and is struck with a ring or an iron nail placed on the little finger.

[718] the kârâ"), one of whom carries the kârâ, the perforated board which is the emblem of the fetish and at the same time the altar on which sacrifice is made to deceased members. First come the souroukou (hyenas) who guard the sacred grove and during the sacrifices drive away prying, uninitiated people; they wear crude masks, roll their big heads right and left, and utter frightful "hou hous." The [522] korodouga (clowns), who rake the paths in the sacred grove as well as its environs to protect it from brush fires, run from one to another shouting obscenities. Furiously they shake their gourds, which have handles and are perforated and filled with small stones, and furiously they blow into pipes made of pumpkin stems. The leader of this [292] band is dressed up in a cloak made of reed stems, he also wears a reed headdress which is topped by a pyramid of large red beans called n'go blé and decorated with a plume; in his hands he holds the emblem of the group, a long pole on which are hung dirty bags, sorghum stems 10 to 20 centimeters long bound into bundles, pumpkin stems, /123/ skulls of rats, beaks of ducks and hawks, panther claws, etc.

794 796 292 522 Apart from the long string of red beans which all korodougo are required to wear which they twine around their necks several times or sling over the shoulder, crossing and recrossing it on the back and chest, each one dresses according to his own inspiration. The hats are made of bunches of feathers, wings of vultures and ducks, and even entire birds, and around them to decorate them further are red beans, rat skulls, birds beaks, claws, and small bones; all these objects fall on the neck and shoulders and knock together with a sinister sound. Next to men in full breeches are men in rags or men with close-fitting trousers made of innumerable pieces all in different

colors, one leg of which goes down to the ankle while the other does not even reach the knee. Some brandish wooden swords, and others ride astride on a bamboo, a reed, or a sorghum stalk, rearing and kicking, and there is not one who does not act the clown.

The bisatjila (flagellants) make their flexible whips whistle in the air; shortly thereafter these whips rain blows onto their backs; the ta tougoula (fire lighters, incendiaries) seem impatient to shower their bare backs with sparks. The djara (lions) or sogo (beasts, animals) with masks even larger than those of the souroukou (hyenas) growl around the n'goni sama (1), also called wara (fearless wild animals).

1. N'goni, "thorns"; sama, "to kill for oneself."

The soula run from one group to another, slip between legs, and never stay still; they are seen everywhere, sometimes standing, sometimes with hands on the ground on all fours, or again sitting down, breaking bundles of grass or bits of wood between their hands and throwing them with shrill cries at the heads of their companions. And at the end of the procession come the old men, weighed down by the years and no longer of an age for all this fancy dress. They drag or carry the victims intended for the sacrifices.

In the grove around the sacred tree, there is a deafening noise of drums, triangles, reed pipes, and many voices /124/ that shout all together without ever harmonizing. At a sign from the leader, the kâra bearer goes and stands before the fetish tree, and everything becomes calm and quiet. The youths who have been waiting for seven years to be initiated advance in a line, fall on their knees before the fetish and its emblem, and then prostrate themselves with foreheads in the dust. They remain in this position as long as the sacred hymn lasts. On rising, they say: "Djanté koré déou djanté (djanté children of the djanté koré), djanté ma (man of the djanté)," and each dances the dance of the group to which he belongs. These dances are indecent and always conclude with an obscene gesture.

The oldest sons belong to the groups of their fathers; as to the others, they choose the group they like best. Thenceforth they are

88] with honey water and milk. They go to the public square, the only ballroom known in Bambara country. The big boys, their heads freshly shaved and their bodies thoroughly greased and all shining, also arrive in a long line, and in the square there is nothing but indescribable bedlam, for all these people at once greet each other, talk and shout, and not a voice is in harmony.

[82] Young and old consult the canopy of stars, for although they are not astronomers they know that around midnight a certain star of the firmament is at such and such an angle, and they are impatient. Then the hour has come, and the male soli are crouched in the place of honor, and the young lady soli arrive in single file, their hair in disorder and their hips girded with paltry loincloths that reach from the knees up to the navel. The loincloths are gifts from the fiancé [392] of each one, and must be worn. Their colors vary, indicating the tribe and caste of each girl, so one can see that they are of some importance (1).

1. The Moslems have blue. The pure Bambara wants a yellow background with black rose shapes and lines.

[186] A Bambara woman is proud of her blood and proud of her tribe, and, wearing her loincloth in the national colors, a narrow cloth band of black stripes on a yellow background, she almost thinks she is a queen, if not a goddess, at the soli si. The girls' gait reflects this feeling: with heads high, eyes 15 paces ahead, chests stuck out like Prussians (they puff themselves up a little to bring out their charms), they admire themselves and are enraptured, each knowing that she is the focus of more than one shining eye full of desire. They advance slowly, raising a cloud of dust, and in her hands each one shakes a bag of goatskin and an iron box filled with little pebbles; her torso bends to the left and bends to the right. In the dark of the night as the little fires /179/ cast their gleams here and there, one might say that they are frail shells lost in the waves and tossed by the winds, struck by the swell and always ready to capsize.

881 Shouting -- and that is an understatement, the young people 534 throw themselves onto their instruments, which are drums of every shape and size. Some, the bass drums, are carried on the abdomen and fastened to the waist by a bark cord; others, smaller but longer, are slid between the legs or under the arms, and tambourines, hung from the neck, swing at the level of the navel as a new kind of pendant. The old women with toothless jaws join in; they scrape two iron rods together or create syncapation by furiously beating on an inverted gourd floating in a conari full of water with a piece of wood or a pumpkin stem.

881 Virgins, married women, widows, prostitutes (all mingling) slowly circle again and again around the orchestra behind the soli, shaking in their hands the bags of goatskin or boxes of white iron, and until morning every boy that is to be circumcised and every girl to be excised hears the glories and feats of his lineage. There is nothing very lofty about these songs containing thousands and thousands of wishes; although there is a feeling of passion in them, there is no love; beauty of the heart is lacking, and all is badly told. The men also from time to time leave the jug and mingle in the dance, but the night belongs to the women. And it belongs to the gods. If, tired of the bedlam, you leave the ball and go outside the village to breathe a little fresh air, you hear the piercing cries of the herald of the gods, you even see him in the darkness, running from one tree [292] to another; with horns on his head and a coat decorated with feathers of hens, guinea fowl, egrets (1), etc., he looks like those story demons

1. This is the costume worn by Negroes when they dance the dance of the Komo fetish.

which grandmothers depict so well in the late evenings.

[789] And this herald of the gods, with his retinue, is performing a curious rite: he is chasing out the evil spirits and clearing a place for the favorite god of the village so as to drive away sorcery from the circumcised and the excised. /180/ In Bambara this is called kéné sâlo (1) and can be translated into French as "exorcising the place."

881 until they are completely healed; for it is not until evening, when the setting sun reddens the horizon and takes on its bloody hue that they re-enter the village. From this day on they wear a costume (all [272] yellow if they are Bambara) of trousers, a blouse, and on their heads a kind of handkerchief tied under the chin (4). They pass the time in

4. In some villages, instead of the yellow handkerchief the circumcised have a cap with two points. In Bani country the circumcised wear the blouse and handkerchief, or cap, and nothing more.

making mats, singing, striking together gourd disks strung on a stick, and especially in eating, "for they are being stuffed," and in sleeping. /181/

881 But in speaking of the boys, I forgot the little girls! They undress under the tree nearest to the sacred karité. Naked as a worm, 304 each one when her turn comes runs at top speed with her abdomen to the ground and throws herself into the arms of a woman, also of the blacksmith caste, who immediately cuts her. On a braided platter, [285 made of fine, pliable grass, the mother or her substitute receives the 415 bloody fragment which will be a grigri, a talisman or good-luck 789] charm for the house, and while the gunpowder speaks, the disabled girl, pretending not to be suffering at all from the loss of her clitoris, goes back to her place, and another replaces her.

881 The session ends with the last girl, and the crowd breaks out in a song of joy and triumph. The mother, the eldest sister, or a [382] serving woman wraps the excised girl in a big white cloth and carries her astride her back to the village to the hut which has been prepared for her (1). This carrying, so laughable in itself (they can walk, even

[621 1. Each village is divided into
346] quarters. The excised girls of each quarter have their hut in that quarter.

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1. Newborn infants have their heads shaved six to eight days after birth; they cannot go out of their homes before being shorn of the hair of the womb (ou ba, "their mothers"; kono, "womb"; si, hair).

881 mother provides some of hers. The dress-up outfit of our excised girls
292 is a regular harness; two or three loincloths in layers encircle their waists, and of the actual costume, the band of cloth which shakes behind in limp and loose trains, the big pompom is all that shows. At least one can look at them and see them, as for once pretty white blouses clothe them; the long cloth slings required in the dances are thrown over their shoulders and brought to the front and create quite a pretty effect. In Bani country the girls wear a wide belt of cowrie
881 shells around the hips and over the loincloths, and on each side two
301 bundles of cowrie shells hang from leather thongs that pass over the
583 shoulders and are crossed on the chest. This dousou ko (2), as it is

2. Dousou, "soul," "heart," "seat of love"; ko, "affair," "pledge of love."

called, is the remaining portion of the bride price given by the fiancé, and is worth 5,000 to 6,000 cowrie shells.

881 Around the drums that rage in the square, behind the old women who scrape their pieces of scrap iron, and behind the female story-tellers /griottes/ who sing of their charms, their strength and their beauty, the circumcised boys and excised girls circle for a few moments and go and sit on the mats that have been prepared for them.

Kola nuts are distributed to the new citizens; gourds of dége, millet flour mixed with honey water and milk, are placed at the feet of the girls, queens of the day, and the head of the village makes the speech that is required at the beginning of every festival. His herald, standing beside him, repeats it word by word, sentence by

765 Malakou, salakou
Fari ɔ, fari doun ka di." (2)

2. A song heard in Bani country. Since these songs are often improvised, they differ from one region to another.

Translation: "Ah! how pleasant it is to eat mashed beans (fari) and to eat all one's fill, ah! how pleasant it is to eat mashed beans!"

The excised daughters and grandaughters of the deceased wear mourning for about eight to ten days. During this time they stay in the b'lon, or entry hut, and spin cotton. The only noteworthy fact [513 514] is that they all sleep in the same hut and attend to the wants of nature at set times, going to the bush evening and morning in Indian file with white veils on their heads. For the whole moon following the [293] death, the wife (the wives if the old man was polygamous) of the deceased wear sandals of goatskin and go out dressed only in white.

At the end of the moon, the wives of the deceased become the 78 property of the head of the family, who makes them his own or gives 562 them to his circumcised children (3). Some freedom is left to them, 428

3. Brothers succeed brothers. If there are no brothers, the oldest son inherits. If the deceased is younger than the brother who inherits, the latter possesses the wives but may not enjoy them. If the heir is the son of the deceased, all the father's or grandfather's wives belong to him, and he may enjoy them all except his mother.

for they can ransom themselves if they wish, and for the old and worn, difficulties are soon smoothed away. If the new family head is without a brother and without children or if he is older than the deceased,

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Sacred dance in honor of the N'tomo, the children's fetish.
/sub-caption: The hut with a conical roof, on the right, is the temple of the boli fetish Nia. /

4: Henry--268 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8

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4: Henry--271 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8

Left: Souba (monkey), society of the Koré. Above: Denouba (the big drum) and kinge (a triangle), society of the Koré. Center: Head korodouga and his herald, society of the Koré. Right: Souroukou (hyena), society of the Koré.

4: Henry--280 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8

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Circumcised Bambara youths.

Excised Bambara girls.

4: Henry--281 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8

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Young Bambara girls dressed to go out.

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Circumcised youth dressed up.

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Excised girl in the dress-up attire of Bani country.

Excised girl dressed up.

4: Henry--282 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8